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Prudentèr, Piè, Proſperè.

A

SERMON

Preach'd at

TAMWORTH

On the Second of *December* 1697.

Being the

Thankſgiving Day

FOR

His MAJESTY's ſafe Return, and for the Happy and Honourable PEACE.

Publiſh'd at the Requeſt of Friends.

By S. COLLINS, *A. M.*

The King truſteth in the Lord, and through the Mercy of the Moſt High, he ſhall not miſcarry, Pſal. 21. 7.

Fortis nemo poteſt judicari, niſi & prudens fuerit, *Sacr.*

Homines ad Deos nullâ re propiùs accedunt, quàm ſalutem hominibus dando. *Cicc.*

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PROV. XVI. ver. 20.

He that handleth a Matter wiſely ſhall find Good; and whoſo truſteth in the Lord, happy is he.

IN our Conſideration of this Book of the Wiſe Man, we ſhall find it to be purely independant; there being ſcarce any one Verſe that hath any thing of Relation or Connection with ~~one~~ another, whether antecedent or conſequent; or indeed one Verſe almoſt ſometime to conſiſt and agree with it ſelf: As to Matter of Senſe; and of this the Text at firſt view, may ſeem to be an Inſtance: But I hope the Connection of the latter part with the former, may be eaſily made reconcileable by this, or ſuch like Paraphraſe. He that would bring his Affairs to a good End, muſt have a good Knowledge and Underſtanding therein; *i. e.* He muſt handle the Matter wiſely, as he can; and when he has ſo done, he muſt truſt in God for the Succeſs; and then happy ſhall that Man be: *He that handleth a Matter wiſely ſhall find Good; and whoſo truſteth in the Lord, happy is he.* There is nothing more manifeſt, than that it is greatly reputable for a Man, when he is ſetting upon an Affair, or has any Enterprize in hand, to make uſe of Deliberation, (becauſe it is accounted by the World the Property of a wiſe and an underſtanding

Man;) and to employ all his Diſcretion in the Purſuit of it, if he has Hopes (as there is no fear if ſo he acts) to be ſucceſsful in the iſſue. Yet notwithſtanding what has been ſaid, it muſt not be ſo taken and received, as wholly to rely on his own Wiſdom and Capacity; but to put his Truſt in God, and to expect his Bleſſing, that ſo the Event may be proſperous and comfortable: And whoever takes this Method ſhall aſſuredly find Good, in what he goes about, and ſo therein happy is he: And this Concluſion may we of this Kingdom truly fairly draw, as to the late Glorious Undertaking our Soveraign Lord the King was pleaſed to engage Himſelf in with ſo much Hazard and Expence, for Vindicating our Religion, our Laws, our Liberties, our Lives, and Preſerving our Excellent Government upon its ancient Baſis and Foundation: His Wiſe Conduct in the whole Tranſaction, His Admirable Succeſs in putting an End to the Devouring Sword, and Shedding any more Chriſtian Blood, by accompliſhing ſo Honourable and ſo Reviving a Peace, as He has done, loudly proclaims the ſame. This then is the Sum of the Text; He that would be bleſſed in his Undertakings muſt truſt in God, as well as exerciſe his own Prudence and Underſtanding therein. But I confeſs 'tis very ſtrange to conſider how backward Men are for the moſt part to practice this Duty of *Truſting in God*, eſpecially in things wherein their own Wiſdom and Character is concerned: What Reaſons can be aſſigned for this I know not, unleſs theſe Two;

1. Either they do not ſee their own Inability and Weakneſs; They are not truly and ſufficiently ſenſible

ble of their own Infirmities, Failings, and Imprudence in handling Matters; or,

2. They are not rightly and ſtrongly ſenſible of God's Aſſiſtance, of his Power, and Wiſdom to direct them. Sometimes one, and ſometimes both of theſe Reaſons poſſibly keep Men from exerciſing a Truſt in God: As to the former, it muſt be acknowledged, that Men are generally unwilling to own their own Weakneſs, eſpecially that of Underſtanding. 'Tis no Difficulty ſpeculatively to convince Men of the Weakneſs of their Bodies, and the Miſeries of their Nature; tho' it be, I confeſs, an harder task to make them draw this ſo Natural and Chriſtian Inference therefrom. That therefore they ſhould ſet no great Value on whatſoever leans on ſuch a tottering and weak Foundation as their Lives are: The daily Spectacles of Mortality, the Sight of others Deaths, their own Indiſpoſitions and Decayableneſſes, tell them frequently of their Frailties, as to their Bodies; but yet, they, for the moſt part, won't be convinc'd of the Infirmities of their Mind; tho' in truth, at the ſame time, the often Miſtakes of others, as well as themſelves, might do it. How often do the wiſeſt Mortals take wrong Meaſures in their Worldly Matters and Deſigns, and ſo expoſe themſelves to cenſure, *i. e.* their Ignorance; and yet for all this, others are not hereby cautioned, but follow their Steps, and are not diſcouraged from perpetrating the like Follies; ſo true is that of the wiſe Man, Ver. 2. of this Chapter, *All the Ways of a Man are clean in his own Eyes.*

Tho'

Tho' the generality of Men are ſubject to theſe Weakneſſes of Mind, as well as Body; nay, I might have ſaid all; yet how few take this into ſerious Conſideration, ſo as to be convinced that they are liable to the very ſame Incidencies? Poſſibly here and there may be found a truly Humble, Meek, and Religious Man, that concludes with *Solomon*, that *all is Vanity.* Acknowledges his own Imbecillities, Ignorance and Frailneſſes, and ſays, with the Prophet, *O Lord, I know that the Way of Man is not in himſelf, it is not in Man that walketh to direct his Steps*, 10. *Jer.* 23. But take it generally, and you may obſerve, that Men are too fond of themſelves and their Endowments, they are too apt to ſet a mighty Eſteem on their Knowledge, their Learning, their Sagacity, their Virtue, their Policies and their Extenſiveneſs of Underſtanding, and ſo upon ſuch their high Thoughts of their Accompliſhments, believe and conclude themſelves capable of mighty Things. Their ordinary Diſcourſes are ſtuft uſually with the Elogiums and fulſom Flatteries they careſs one another with; and to ſpeak the Truth plainly, the natural Genius and Inclination Men have to receive and accept all this without farther Scrutiny, as to the Ground and Merit of it, is the Cauſe, that if they have any more than ordinary Excellencies, they eſtimate them according to Report, and not Deſert: and ſure ſuch a Readineſs, and Eagerneſs in Men to value things not ſo much according to reality, as the Judgment of others, is a great Demonſtration of Weakneſs, and want of a better Judgment in themſelves. For what can be more undeniably clear, that a wrong and miſtaken Judgment cannot give a real Exiſtence to what has none. So that if we have not ſo much

Good-

Goodneſs and Lowlineſs of Mind to declare what is true of our ſelves, and to own ſincerely our littleneſs of Underſtanding and Accompliſhment, let us not ſhew our ſelves ſo ſillily Arrogant and Conceited as upon the flattering Evidence or Report of another, to challenge that to our ſelves, which we can't but be ſenſible we have not, nor do indeed deſerve. It would do well, if we would put the matter upon Debate, and make a ſober Enquiry, wherein our Glory and Strength lies, and find out what it is, that poſſeſſes us with ſuch an Elation of our ſelves, and our own Worth, and if it does appear that ſuch an Apprehenſion is fooliſh and inconſiderable, be we then perſwaded to acknowledge our Weakneſs, and then truſt in God: Becauſe

1. This is always to be obſerved, That a Truſt in God muſt have its Beginning and Foundation laid in a Diſtruſt of our ſelves, and an humble Senſe of our own Weakneſs; we muſt forbear to lean to our own Underſtanding, before we can be ſaid to make a right hearty Submiſſion and Acquieſſency to God's Will; diſown all falſe Hopes before we can properly truſt in God: And beſides, having laid ſuch a commendable Ground-work of Humility in our ſelves, and being deeply ſenſible of our Defects and Wantings, we muſt not be ſo miſtaken as to think we muſt go no farther, but remember there is ſomething ſtill requiſite that is to be done; we muſt not pleaſe our ſelves to ſit ſtill, and to ſay only, we truſt in God for what we ſtand in need of, whether relating to our ſelves, or the Publick; as Deliverance out of Trouble, as we have greatly been, if we call to mind the Years that are paſt; but a good Chriſtian, tho' ſenſible

ſenſible of his Weakneſs, muſt exerciſe that Power and Prudence he has,

2. In being diligent, and inquiſitive after all proper, lawful Helps and Means of Preſervation. He muſt do ſomething, tho' his Power and Capacity can't reach to ſupply all Wants, yet he may endeavour what he can to ſupply ſome. Tho' the Enterprize looks as if it could not be accompliſht by his own Policy and Power; yet he is not to conclude it impoſſible: Tho' 'tis poſſible an impending Evil can't be at preſent foreſeen how to be avoided, yet we are not to deſpair of it; but make uſe of thoſe Faculties of Soul and Body that God hath vouchſafed us, joined with daily Prayer for his gracious Aſſiſtance, Direction and Bleſſing. We are to handle the Matter as wiſely as we can, and then, ſays the Wiſe Man, *we ſhall find Good*; we need not queſtion but we ſhall find the comfortable effect of ſuch our Induſtry, and Endeavours. As Truſt in God muſt have its Foundation laid in diſtruſt of our ſelves; ſo our next Buſineſs is to be induſtrious and active in doing what we are able, and exerting that Power we have to the utmoſt. Becauſe the contrary is a State directly oppoſite to a Chriſtian Truſt, for that puts a Man upon Action, and as to this our King has given us an Inſtance to the higheſt. It muſt be owned, 'tis true, that the Caſe may be ſo melancholly and hopeleſs to Appearance, that good Men may be put into ſuch a Confuſion, and ſo great Perplexity about it, that they may be forced to cry out, with *Moſes*, *ſtand ſtill, and lets ſee the Salvation of God*, which was the *Iſraelites* Caſe, 14 *Exod.* 13. *v.* They were now come out of *Egypt*, and were hard purſued, the *Egyptians* were behind

hind them, and the Red Sea before them: Here was no Room, or Liberty for Flight, nor had they Power and Strength enough to turn back, and engage the Enemy; what therefore could be adviſed here? ſuch a Strait they were in, as to puzzle the deepeſt Underſtanding; why *Moſes* tells them, *Fear ye not, ſtand ſtill, and ſee the Salvation of the Lord, which he will ſhew you this Day*; for, ſays the next Verſe, *The Lord ſhall fight for you*; and we ſoon read how God delivered *Iſrael*, and drowned the *Egyptians*: And truly have not we had the experience of the like Caſe our ſelves? To that deplorable State were we brought, that we knew not what would become of us; we had an Army within our own Bowels, and this joined with thoſe bloody ones of the Iriſh Brood, enough to have hewn us all in pieces, and left none of us alive; there wanted nothing but the Word of Command to have done it, kill and ſlay would have done it, kill and ſlay would have done the Work effectually, and what could have hindered it? Our Government was now brought to the Arbitrary Standard, all the Power of the Kingdom, both by Sea and Land, moſtly in Popiſh Hands, or thoſe that were thought Popiſhly affected; Seven Learned Biſhops ſent to the *Tower*, for acting (what all had the Liberty but themſelves) a good Conſcience; our Colledges made Seminaries for Prieſts, our Corporations cajol'd and turn'd up ſide down to ſerve a Turn; and in ſome Places, Troops ſet to awe Men to chooſe ſuch Burgeſſes for Parliament Men, as ſhould be deſired them upon occaſion; if they did not, they were in Danger of their

Lives; and Moreover, the Sea Ports all in Truſt as they would have it. Here was no eſcaping either the Sword behind us, or round about us, which you pleaſe, from devouring us; or if we could have reacht the Sea, there were little Hopes, the Paſſages were ſo ſecured; or if we did, it might be we ſhould have fell into the Hands of thoſe that would have ſhewed us as little Mercy as they at home: We had ſeveral, like *Moſes*, calling on us in our low Eſtate to ſtand ſtill, to be quiet and patient, to look up to, and truſt in God, and we ſhould ſee the Salvation of the Lord; and ſo we did, by the miraculous Appearance of our gracious Sovereign for our Deliverance; at whoſe Arrival nothing but Joy was then ſeen in every ones Face, whatever Abatements there have been ſince, and what Reaſon, let thoſe anſwer for it, that think themſelves concerned; then our Enemies like thoſe of the *Iſraelites*, vaniſhed as Dew before the Morning Sun.

Now theſe Caſes were extraordinary, when there was little or no Room left for Humane Wiſdom, and Direction; the moſt Wiſe and Sagacious muſt be as it were at a ſtand, as not being able to ſee any Means to help in ſuch a circumſtanc'd Condition, but muſt wholly reſign and commit himſelf unto God, and truſt in him for Mercy and Deliverance; and I queſtion not but many, and many did ſo, in our late trying Times. But now, where the Caſe and Occaſion is ordinary, there we muſt exerciſe all our Faculties of Reaſon and Underſtanding, to prevent our Troubles, and to remove our Fears; and uſe all the beſt Chriſtian Endeavours we

we can to preſerve our ſelves from the Impending Calamity; and when we have done all this, heartily to commend and commit our ſelves to the Divine Goodneſs and Protection, both as to Time and Manner, when and how, and by what means, he is pleaſed to deliver us.

So that a Chriſtian's Truſt in God, is both rational and religious, founded upon very good grounds.

1*ſt*. If we conſider Man himſelf in his own Eſtate, which we before hinted, and that may ſuffice: I need not be upon Enlargement in telling you what frail Creatures all Men are; How we all (none excepted) want ſomething whereon to depend, and to ſupport, and comfort us, when we are in Trouble, Sorrow, Need, Sickneſs, or any other Adverſity. Whoſe Experience does not acquaint him with this? And fully aſſure him that in all ſorrowful Occurrences he had need of greater and better Help, than Man can give unto him, even of having God *for his Help, his Fortreſs, his Deliverer, in whom he will and muſt truſt*; as the Pſalmiſt phraſes it, *Pſal.* 18.1, 2.

2*dly*. If we conſider the Reaſonableneſs of this Duty in reſpect of God, who indeed is the moſt true and proper Object of our Truſt, upon the account of his infinite Attributes and Perfections: Some of which it will not be amiſs to ſingle out, and treat of ſo far only as they tend to declare the Reaſonableneſs of Truſting in him: *Sc.* Thoſe of his Omniſcience, his Love and Goodneſs, his Power and Eternity.

First, Upon the account of God's Omniſcience: The Practice of this Duty of Truſting in him, is very rational, and worthy our Remembrance at all times, becauſe he fully and perfectly knows all our Conditions, Wants and Dangers, and this both Spiritual and Temporal; nay more, all thoſe Ways and Methods which are truly ſerviceable, ſuitable, and proper for our Comfort, Relief, and Deliverance: He is wiſe to know and underſtand our Neceſſities, and wiſe to ſupply and ſupport us under them, and this both to Time and Manner: *His Underſtanding is infinite*, ſays the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 147. 5. He knows all our Diſtempers, and he knows how, and when to preſcribe a Remedy for them all too. He is infinitely wiſe to find out ſuch ways of Safety and Preſervation, as excel and overcome all thoſe Difficulties which would put all Humane Wiſdom whatever, into a Confuſion to think of. As for inſtance; Sometimes he brings to paſs his Ends, without any viſible means, filling Mens Bellies with his hid Treaſure, *Pſ.* 17. 14. How does he make (as he is pleaſed ſometimes) ſome Men to flouriſh and proſper in the World by ſuch ſecret ways, as neither we, or they underſtand? On the other hand; How does he defeat, and bring to nought the moſt likely and ſucceſsful Means, tho' ſome Men do as much as lyes in them to handle the matter wiſely, as the Text ſays? Tho' their Projects be laid according to all the Rules of Policy and Foreſight, yet without his Bleſſing they become fruitleſs, and come to nothing; ſo that the *Battel is not always to the Strong, nor yet Bread to the Wiſe, nor Riches*

to

to Men of Underſtanding, nor yet Favour to Men of Skill, Eccleſ. 9. 11. but it may happen to them, and does many times, as the Prophet ſpeaks, that *though they ſow much, yet they bring in but little; they eat, and have not enough; they drink, but are not filled; they are clothed, but not warm; earn Wages, but put it into a Bag with holes*, Hagg. 1. ver. 6. On the contrary; Many times you'll find ſmall Matters become great and luxuriant, through God's Bleſſing. Upon all theſe accounts highly reaſonable we may ſee it is, that we ſhould truſt in God, who knows all our Wants, Dangers and Circumſtances, and who knows likewiſe how to ſupply, relieve, comfort, and to deliver, when to all Apprehenſion there ſeems no appearance, or poſſibility of it, and who hath ſhewed himſelf eminently ſo toward us of theſe Kingdoms in our great Deliverance, and our late Glorious Peace too.

Secondly, We muſt acknowledge the ſame Truth of this Duty, if we conſider his great Goodneſs, Love, and Faithfulneſs. God not only knows our Troubles, and knows how to ſupport and deliver, but he is as it were affected, and concerned for us when we are in ſuch a ſorrowful State, ſympathizing (if I may ſo ſay) with his People in all their Mournings, *in all their Afflictions he is afflicted*, as he tells us by the Prophet, *Iſa.* 63. ver. 9. As he always ſees our Dangers and Allotments here, ſo ſuch is his great Goodneſs and Tenderneſs of Affection, that he always takes particular care of thoſe that put their Truſt in him: The neareſt and beſt Relations we have, even Father

ther and Mother (whether natural or political) may forſake us) but the Lord our God will never forſake thoſe that put their Truſt in him, for *he is an Helper of the Friendleſs*, Pſal. 10. 14. In the day of Proſperity, and when the Sun ſhines bright upon us, then 'tis uſual to meet with many Friends; but in the day of Adverſity, how few to be ſeen? When it looks dark and melancholly round about us, then the Throng of Flatterers, and falſe Friends, give us the ſlip, and vaniſh, and can no where be found. But God is the ſame to day, and for ever: He is always kind, good, gracious, and merciful; he is always the ſame, *a Father to the Fatherleſs, and an Husband to the Widow, a very preſent Help in time of need*, Pſal. 46. 1. and 68. 5.

Thirdly, The Duty will appear greatly reaſonable, if we conſider God's Infinite Power to ſupply and comfort us in any Condition, and to deliver us out of any Trouble, Publick or Private. By the very ſame Power he made all things, does he uphold and preſerve them. *All Power belongs unto God*, 62 *Pſal.* 11. upon which Account it is made an Argument why we ſhould truſt in him, 26 *Iſ.* 4. *Truſt in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlaſting Strength:* and indeed, upon this very Conſideration is it, that we find *Abraham* is ſaid to have hoped againſt Hope, being fully perſwaded, that God who had promiſed was able to perform, 4 *Rom.* 18. So that 'tis undeniably evident, that we ſhould Truſt in God, becauſe able to relieve all our Wants, Spiritual and Temporal, and to deliver us out of all our Fears and Troubles, as we of this Nation have lately and amazingly experienced.

Ult.

Ult. The Conſideration of God's Eternity, does highly illuſtrate the Reaſonableneſs of putting our Truſt in him. All other Comforts and Aſſiſtances are tranſitory and vaniſhing: *Our Fathers, where are they, and the Prophets, do they live for ever?* 1 *Zech.* 5. *Our Days upon Earth are as a Shadow, that flieth away,* 102 *Pſal.* 11. *v. When our Breath goeth forth we are gone, and then all our Thoughts periſh,* 146 *Pſal.* 4. But now, *God is from Everlaſting to everlaſting, the ſame God bleſſed for ever.* And ſure 'tis a mighty Priviledge and Comfort to have always ſuch a Friend ſo near unto us! To have our Wants ſupplied, our Fears removed, our Dangers prevented, and to have all things work together for Good in the End; to have God our Refuge, our Strength, and our merciful God. Happy is the Man then, that truſteth in God, and *Happy are the People, whoſe God is the Lord.*

But more particularly the Advantages of this Duty may be theſe Two:

1. God's gracious Direction, and
2. Continual Protection of us.

1. God's gracious Direction. 'Tis too well known, that Man is not only a poor weak Creature, but an ignorant one too. Ever ſince the Fall how is his Knowledge weakned, his Judgment corrupted, his Underſtanding obſcured, and how are all the Faculties of his Soul impoveriſh'd, and run into a miſerable Declenſion; ſo that he now ſtands in great Want of a Director in the Way that leadeth

deth unto Life, of a ſafe and comfortable Guide to help him to ſee the things that belong unto his Peace, and of that happy Friend that will give him ſuch good Advice, whereby he may know what to avoid, and what to practice: And ſuch an one, and Greater, has he, who truſts in God; for he is under an Almighty Power, under the Care of God himſelf, who will aſſuredly direct him in all his Ways, according to that of the Wiſe Man; *Truſt in the Lord with all thine Heart, and lean not to thy own Underſtanding; In all thy Ways acknowledge him, and he ſhall direct thy Paths*, 3 *Prov.* 5, 6. And I make no queſtion, but our great Deliverer was very ſenſible of this, and made God his Direction in all his Enterprizes, and conſtantly ſued to him for the ſame, which has made him ſo greatly Proſperous, even to the Amazement of all *Europe*.

2. By putting our Truſt in God we engage his continual Protection of us: By owning his Power, and imploring his Bleſſing on what we take in hand, we as it were oblige him to take us into his ſpecial Care, and to direct our ſteps. This is the Senſe that Men have toward thoſe whoſe Dependance and Relyance is upon them for Succour or Advice; and they do eſteem it as a due part of Juſtice to take the Cauſe of ſuch into their hand, and to ſtand by, aſſiſt and countenance them what they are able, and ſhall we think the righteous and merciful God to do leſs? that he will not be as ready and zealous to vindicate, provide for, preſerve and deliver thoſe that Truſt in him? We are well aſſured, if we acknowledge

knowledge God in all our Ways, he will direct our Paths; that if we are not wanting in this Duty, God will never be wanting to us, becauſe we ſhall not lack any manner of thing that is good for us, and more, he has ſolemnly made over this by promiſe, *Pſal.* 37. ver. 23. *The ſteps of a good Man are ordered by the Lord; though he fall, he ſhall not be utterly caſt down, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.*

Thus you may perceive the Nature, Reaſonableneſs of this Duty of Truſting in God, and likewiſe the Advantages, and therein the Happineſs of thoſe that do ſo.

Let us make this Practical Inference, and good Uſe of what has been ſaid: To be wrought upon, and perſwaded to the Obſervance of it at all times, from the danger of not doing it; becauſe it is not a Duty of ſuch Indifferency, that Men may neglect as they pleaſe, and ſee occaſion; for as by acting the Matter wiſely, and Truſting in God, we ſurely engage his Care, (and I hope found the joyful Effects of it in that great Mercy we are call'd upon this Day to celebrate;) ſo we muſt know, that if we now, or at any other time elſe, act the contrary, we ſhall forfeit that Divine Bleſſing, and deſervedly provoke him to forſake us: For if we Truſt in our ſelves, and reſt and depend upon our own Policy, and Wit, he may ſtill ſuffer us to be ruined by our ſelves. Truſt properly and rightly belongs to God only, and all Prudence and Policy without comes to nothing, nay more, *Curſed is he that maketh Fleſh*

his Arm, Jer. 17. 5. 'Tis plain the contrary will make him a Jealous God, and provoke him to anger againſt us, and to make all our Ways to become a Snare to us, and our little Self-dependance to deſtroy us the ſooner, and the more effectually in the iſſue: and thus it miſerably befell the *Iſraelites* in the Wilderneſs; *They truſted not in God, but followed the Ways of their own Heart, and lingered after* Egypt, *and the Idols of other Nations:* They believed not God's Word by his Servant *Moſes* (as others may do in our time) and would not hearken to his Counſel, but would have their own Ways: And what was the End of this? We ſoon read it, *&c. That God gave them up to their own Hearts luſts, and to follow their own Imaginations*, which was their utter Ruine, *Pſal.* 106. ver. 13, 14. and if you pleaſe to obſerve, 'tis recorded of the ſame People *Iſrael*, that notwithſtanding all the Wonders that they had ſeen at the *Red-Sea*, notwithſtanding God had holpen them there for his Name's ſake, and led them through the Deep as through a Wilderneſs: Notwithſtanding he ſaved them from their Adverſaries hand, and delivered them from the hand of the Enemy; yet within a while, *They forgat his Works, and would not abide his Counſel, but Luſt came upon them in the Wilderneſs, and they tempted God in the Deſert:* But, O! how diſmal was the Conſequence of this? God gave them indeed their Deſire; but withal ſent Leanneſs into their Soul, and then the Fire was kindled in their Company, and the Flame burnt up the Ungodly.

Ungodly. We have been a People as greatly delivered, and ſaved as they; have a care we forget not the Works of God, what he has ſo marvellouſly wrought for us, and give ſome of us our Deſires at laſt, and ſo we all periſh; leaſt when-ever we are in danger again, God will in no caſe appear for us any more, but ſuffer us for our Ingratitude, and not knowing when we are well, and what Mercies we have received, to fall into Troubles again, and for our lingering Minds, and ſlighting his Providence over us, to bring us into a Condition worſe than *Egyptian* Bondage. 'Tis frequent and natural for People to do thus, that do not *Truſt in God*, and own his Appearances for them, as you may obſerve in the *Iſraelites* again; this being their Crime, *They fell from one Abomination to another:* from Rebellion to Idolatry, from affronting Men to diſhonouring God; from oppoſing *Moſes* and *Aaron*, to rejecting the *Lord of Hoſts*; for 'tis reported of them, that *they joyned themſelves unto* Baal-peor, *and eat the Offerings of the Dead: Thus they provoked him with their own Inventions, and the Plague was great among them.* I heartily wiſh we may ſo remember this ſad Inſtance, and that better to own God's Mercies to us, and what he hath in our own Time and Memories done for us, that ſo we may never provoke him to viſit us with the like Judgment. The Sword you know hath been a great while unſheathed among us, and our Neighbours abroad, as having had a long and expenſive War both of Blood and Trea-

ſure: In the whole Management whereof our King has greatly ſignalized himſelf, that happy qualify'd Perſon the Text mentions and recommends: One that has given the World to underſtand he can *handle a Matter wiſely*, as alſo that he could not find Good, or be proſperons in any of His Royal Undertakings, without he truſted in God too: He being that happy Perſon hath made us happy alſo; both in the Bleſſings of a Miraculous Deliverance, and an Illuſtrious Peace, tho' one as greatly joyful and ſurprizing as the other; and as to both, where did the Excellency of Wiſdom, and an holy Truſt, ſhine more bright? Such Teſtimonies of both, that it would be too large to attempt here; and if I ſhould go about it, I could not do it to the life, or worthy of him, and ſo muſt leave it to Pens more able, and of more leiſure to give it the World in Volumes. His whole Life in all its Tranſactions, has been the Admiration of the World; and ever ſince he made the happy Step into theſe Kingdoms, it has been confirm'd; and if 'twas poſſible, every day more and more ſwollen, and aggrandized. The Text may ſuit very well with the Occaſion of the Day for future Practice as well as former; and truly what it tells us, we have found ſo; and if ever Text did belong to a Prince, it does to ours: If ever any *handled a Matter wiſely*, or might be ſaid to *Truſt in God*, it muſt be declared of him: Look either upon the Wiſdom of His whole Royal Conduct, or the Piety of His Method and Proceedings

ceedings all along: As to His Conduct, what could beſpeak more Underſtanding and Wiſdom, either before His Arrival or ſince. He fully Conſidered, (the Property of the Wiſe) and well-weighed the Foundation whereon he went, before he came hither: He conſidered not only the Danger we, and all other Proteſtants were in, but how to accompliſh our Preſervation and Deliverance; otherwiſe it would have look'd like Raſhneſs and Imprudence, as knowing who He was to engage, and what Difficulties to encounter; and having thus conſider'd, the Enterprize was reſolved on, wherein appear'd His Wiſdom; and then rely'd on God for the Succeſs, wherein appear'd his Piety, and God be thanked for the bleſſed Effects of it! otherwiſe in all likelihood we muſt have been a ruin'd People; and I am apt to believe no ſincere Proteſtant can ſay the contrary, what-ever Tenderneſſes they have in other reſpects: So that in this great Affair He has acted both like a prudent, and a pious Prince, a wiſe Man, and a good Chriſtian: The Vaſtneſs of the Undertaking muſt beſpeak the former, and His relying and ſeeking unto God, and his frequent enjoyning Prayer and Faſting among His People, declare the other: And what like an Heroical Reſolution, and Invocation of God to effect this? Policy without Truſt in God, would have been Folly; and Truſt, without uſing the means, would have been Preſumption.

And

And then ſince his Arrival, which was received and welcom'd with ſuch univerſal Joy, as nothing could be more, the very Captive redeem'd from Death could not expreſs it higher; even then how tranſcendently-Conſidering were Matters carry'd, that there ſhould be little or no Effuſion of Blood, no Oppoſition made, the Throne quietly taken leave of, as if every ones Conſcience was ſatisfied with the Juſtneſs of the Grand Entrance, as well as the Iniquity of ſome Proceedings. And now in this Diſſolved State, which is very remarkable, the whole Kingdom is become its own Adviſer; and what-ever was done, was by our own Conſent, and chiefly by thoſe, that ſince ſeem a little mawkiſh, was the Adminiſtration transferr'd; and when all was ſettled, yet what great Difficulty did attend this Revolution, who but ſuch a Prince could have waded through them all with ſo much Bravery, and Wiſdom? What Hazards has he run Abroad? What Uneaſineſſes have been at Home upon the account of the neceſſary Burdens of the Enterprize, and the Alteration of the Coin? And what Grumblings has all this occaſioned? What Differing Perſons have we heard of, and how difficult to carry Matters but generally to pleaſe? as ſome differing in Point of Religion, ſome in that of Government, ſome for *Paul*, ſome for *Apollo*, and ſome they know not who? ſome for this Government, ſome for that, and ſome they know not, or care not what? Notwithſtanding all the Difficulties we labour'd under, and feared might prove of ill conſequence in the end, we were kept

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in Quiet; How faithful have been our Truſts, and how prudent our Vice-gerents? When at the ſame time we were engaged with ſo powerful a Prince, and ſo known in War, as I know not how he ſhould have been brought to Terms without a Confederacy; and ſuch a General as muſt be ever owned an unparallel'd Inſtance both of Wiſdom, Courage, and Truſt in God: Does not all this loudly beſpeak Him, *WILLIAM*, the Wiſe, the Good, the Great; and eſpecially when to all this we add His Royal Accompliſhment of a Glorious Peace, a Peace as great and amazing as the Deliverance it ſelf; and indeed as to both, we may ſay of our ſelves as the Children of *Iſrael* did upon their Deliverance, *Pſal.* 126. 1, 2, 3. *Who, when the Lord turned the Captivity of Zion, were like unto them that dream*; *i. e.* the Greatneſs of their Deliverance was ſuch as did at firſt aſtoniſh God's People, even them that were particularly concerned therein, inſomuch that they could hardly believe the Deliverance was real; they were apt to believe it was but a Dream, or Fancy. And truly the ſame may we conclude, and ſay both of our Deliverance and our Peace; conſidering how far Deliverance was from our Thoughts, when time was, that nothing was to be ſeen but Black round about us, and that it muſt be God alone that muſt make bare His holy Arm, and bring Salvation, and none other: And more ſtill, that all ſhould be well, and at laſt terminate in a joyful Peace. This was as hard to be ſuppos'd as the other, upon the account of that Difficulty there

there ſeemed of bringing it about; when ſome could not believe it accompliſhable, nay ſeem'd to put the Jeſt upon it, while actually a making, and ſcarce would believe it true, when done. Theſe Reſentments of our ſelves and others, together with the unlook'd for Compliances of the Neighbouring Monarch, and quitting that eſpouſed Intereſt ſome thought indiſſolvable, (being as it were the Foundation of the Quarrel) ſignalized the Concluſion of it more Honourable, Wonderful, and Great. And here not to trouble you with, enlarge however on Foreign Treaties, Conferences, and their whole Management all along; how left to His Preſent Majeſty, and their Succeſsfulneſs: He that could undertake all this, and did, and brought it too to ſo happy a period, could be no other than the very Perſon the Text recommends; that both underſtands how to *handle a Matter wiſely*, and knew that this would not do without *putting his Truſt in God likewiſe*. Majeſty is above Flattery; if leſs had been taken notice of, it would have been Injuſtice both to Him, and the Text too, becauſe none could have explain'd, and made it out better; which being fully anſwered, I hope, to the Joy of all our Hearts: Let us be adviſed to make it our buſineſs to anſwer the End of ſuch a wonderful Tranſaction, that God has been pleaſed to make Him the Glorious Inſtrument of; *&c.* In obſerving this Day by a Double Thankſgiving:

1. To

1. To God; and then,
2. To the King.

1. To God. See that we conſtantly remember what he hath ſo mercifully done for us; never forget to praiſe him for our Deliverance, and our Peace, as long as we have a day to live. Undutiful Murmurings and Diſſatisfactions, have been too much in the Mouths of ſome, than which nothing more unbecoming, more ungrateful, more indiſcreet; but now let us hope to hear better things, and methinks nothing of this could ever have been, nor would be, if we made it our ſerious Care and Endeavour, as it is our Duty, to recollect and conſider how much we owe to God, and what Thanks upon that account lyes upon us to return continually for the Mercies we enjoy by our Deliverance, and we hope ſhall more, by our Peace too.

2. Let us ſhew our Thankſgiving to the King likewiſe. There is no reaſon to queſtion the Equity of either of theſe Duties: As to God, ſo likewiſe ſhould we own our ſelves thankful to the King for what He has wrought for us through God's Bleſſing on His Perſon and Arms. What an Extaſie of Joy did His firſt Coming put the Kingdom into? I hope we ſhall not forget it, or our Duty for it. We owe the happy Worſhipping of God in this Place to that Glorious Arrival of His, whom God hath wonderfully

bleſs'd as to His Perſon in His manifold Preſervations of Him, and His repeated Returnings of Him to us again in Safety. You can't but be ſenſible, that our Deliverance, and our Peace, have been accompanied with great Labour and Danger: No one knows what hard Lyning His Crown has had, and how full of Cares His Royal Head has been for the ſaving this once Periſhing Kingdom: And *Ireland* too owes her Preſervation to His Courage and Conduct; and all of us, our Religion, that dear Enjoyment, which was juſt ſinking under the proud Waves of Popery and Arbitrary Power. All this conſidered, our Praiſe and Thanks are but a Reaſonable Tribute for ſo great a Mercy as that of being delivered from Slavery both of Soul and Body. The very Heathens pay'd a mighty Deference to the Deliverers of their Country; thoſe that ſaved their Lives, preſerved their Franchizes and Immunities, when likely to be taken away, tho' they err'd in giving that Honour, which was Divine, (and which was their Miſtake indeed;) yet let not us fall ſhort of that which is Civil, and commit as great one, if not greater, becauſe we know, or may know better things. What we now urge is no more, than what all Nations acknowledge juſtly due to their Governors. Let us then obſerve the Apoſtle's Advice, *To honour and obey the King for Conſcience ſake*; in our Perſons, by being ready and cordial to ſerve Him as occaſion requires; in our Purſes, by being cheerful in Diſtributing to His, and the Kingdom's Neceſſities, and the Pre-

Preſervation of His Crown and Dignity; the eſtabliſhing of His Throne in Peace, and what may make for the Maintenance of God's true Religion, and Vertue. And *ult.* in our Prayers for Him, that God would long preſerve Him to us; and when He muſt come to exchange His Earthly Crown, He would reward all His Royal Labours, and give Him one far better, even an Heavenly one, that will never fade, reſerved in the Heavens.

Thus having ſpoken to what Duties become us for ſo Glorious a Tranſaction we celebrate this Day, give me leave to beg your Patience a little longer, and to be your Chriſtian Monitor to tell you, that there are two things more highly requiſite to compleat this Duty, and to make your Rejoycing acceptable to God: And they are,

1*ſt.* Sobriety; and
2*dly.* An holy Confidence and Truſt in God's Mercies for time to come.

1*ſt.* Sobriety. This I think is very needful for you to take care of, eſpecially ſince I underſtand you have made great Preparations for a Joyful Day: I do not blame your good Zeal for ſo doing, but I deſire that you would let it be attended with a good Knowledge too; *Sc.* that we do not exceed in our Mirth ſo as to make it ſinful; *Let us not ſin in our Sacrifice.* This is not the End God calls for, or what our Governours deſire in the Appointment of the Day, but the Spiritual Re-

joycing, that it may be a Day to promote God's Glory among us, and all ours. And if you obſerve, the Thankſgiving is required firſt at Church; which ſhews you their Deſign to be pious, and that there our Joy ſhould begin; and I could wiſh with all my Heart, and do, it might end too with the Obſervation of ſuch Inſtructions, which are there given: And hope you will make it your Endeavour ſo to do; that you will be watchful of your ſelves, at ſuch times eſpecially, when either Paſſion, or Pot, or both, may provoke you to do thoſe things you ought not, and which you would not do at another ſeaſon: Among the reſt that might be caution'd, have a care of the Sin of Swearing; I wiſh none may be guilty; if there be none here that ſtand in need of that Remembrance, poſſibly there are thoſe without theſe Walls that be, and do: You would do well to tell, and forewarn ſuch, that they may not fall into that Sin, and that Puniſhment, that is due to ſuch Offenders. However, I can't but tell you, That Exceſs in any kind does not anſwer Mercy, nor make for Reformation, which is, and ſhould be the End of all Mercies beſtowed upon us; therefore be careful of this, leaſt we make that the End, (which ſhould be none) Quarrel, which will greatly aggravate the Offence, and will be a very improper Return of Peace: To prevent which, I deſire there may be no remembrance of former Heats, or Branding one another with Names, or Diſtinguiſhing your ſelves by Parties; but that you would rather endeavour, nay reſolve to put on Love and Charity,

rity, becauſe all Mens Conſciences are not alike; and you muſt never expect it to be, becauſe we do not underſtand all alike. If 'tis poſſible let this Day's Carriage be a cementing us to one another in Love and Friendſhip; for we can't better obſerve it, than by our Readineſs, and our Reſolution to ſhake Hands with our Brethren, and a Chriſtian Watchfulneſs over our ſelves. The Sacrifice of Love, Thankfulneſs, and a Circumſpect Behaviour, you'l find to be far beyond all that of Beef, Barley, and Fine Flower, and to have more laſting Comfort. Tho' it has pleaſed God to give Peace Abroad, yet have a care how we break it at Home; it may be there are thoſe ſtill, that would rejoyce to ſee it! but I hope our worthy Governours will do their parts, by taking notice of this, that ſo we may not mingle Sin with our Mercies, and make him angry who hath been ſo gracious and kind to us; but will for the ſake of this great Bleſſing of Peace, that God hath wrought for us, take care of the King's Peace too: For the Honour therefore of God, the King, and the Day, let us all endeavour it! ſince God deſigned not ſuch Mercies for us purely to eat and drink, but to live thankfully and holily, which is the right and beſt Return of Mercy we can make; and let us remember to live as becomes a People ſaved by the Lord, and this by a true Conſcientious Diſcharge of all our Duties relating to Him, the King's Majeſty, and to one another. I am for your having all juſt, decent Demonſtrations of your Joy poſſible, but ſee that your Behaviour herein be Modeſt, Spiritual, and of

Good

Good Report: This will be your Comfort, and the Means to preſerve your Peace, and to have the God of Peace to be with you; this will be to *handle the Matter wiſely*, and ſo you'll find the Good of it both to your ſelves and others. And if any thing may be added more, 'tis only this, that you would be ſeaſonable in your Rejoycings, not be too late, but break off in time; and if you have any Remainders of Meat, or Money, you would remember the Poor.

Ult. The next Duty to crown your Thanksgiving is an holy Confidence, and truſt in God's Mercy for the future. Since we know now ſure where to place our Truſt and Confidence in all Troubles, in all Conditions, and in all Circumſtances of Life, be they never ſo comfortleſs, and melancholy, never ſo uneaſie to be born, or to appearance hopeleſs of Relief, or Deliverance. If we can ſincerely own, and believe our late Deliverance to be a Mercy, and that it was God's own moſt holy Arm that brought ſo great Salvation, we may with good Aſſurance hope for the ſame kind Providence for the future, and that God will make His Majeſty ſtill a Bleſſing to us: And great Reaſon have we to depend on that Power, that has ſo graciouſly, and ſo ſeaſonably preſerv'd and deliver'd us. If Storms ſhould ariſe, we know on whom to rely; the Rock of Ages, who will be to us a ſtrong Tower of Defence againſt the Enemy. If we ſhould be ſo unhappy to have the ſame Fears, and boiſterous Winds to blow from the

the ſame Point, we have ſtill the ſame God to be our Refuge and Sanctuary; who hath all along appeared for his Church and People, by a conſtant Series, and Succeſſion of Mercies; and hath promiſed, that the Gates of Hell ſhall never prevail againſt them, and our own Experience can confirm it: Though the reſtleſs Spirits of Men, or Devils do conſpire againſt us; tho' the Subtilty and Powers of Darkneſs work againſt us, yet they ſhall all be brought to nought, and by the Providence of the ſame Divine Goodneſs, they ſhall be diſperſt; if we keep faſt to God, and do not forſake him, and his true Religion, his Faithfulneſs and Truth ſhall be our Shield and Buckler; and as the *Pſalmiſt* ſays, *While we are under the Defence of the Almighty, we ſhall not be greatly moved*; and this ſhall be the Happineſs of him that truſts in God. Be what will our Condition then, either as to our ſelves, our Church and Kingdom, our Employment, our Undertaking, our Neceſſity, our Deſires, and the like. Let us but truſt in God, beg his Bleſſing, his Aſſiſtance, his Direction, and he will be with us, he will hear us, he will do what is beſt for us; he will be our God, he will relieve, he will ſupport, he will bleſs, and he will deliver us; and what can we deſire more? And this we have known and ſeen, *ſc. That he that handleth a Matter wiſely ſhall find Good; and that whoſo truſteth in the Lord, happy is he.*

To conclude, After all then that God hath done for us in our wonderful Deliverance, and in our glori-

glorious Peace, we have great Reaſon to truſt in God's Mercy for the future, for the Preſervation of our King, for the Continuance of our Peace, for the Proſperity of our Religion, and for the Bleſſing our Kingdom; and nothing can hinder this but our Sins: Be we careful of this, and how we fall into any this Day; then we may in all Alacrity, and an holy Boldneſs, in all Enlargement of Soul, and Chriſtian Triumph, ſay, and ſing on this Day of our Thankſgiving; This God who hath done ſuch great Things for us, is our God for ever and ever; he will be our Guide unto Death.

Which the ſame God of his infinite Mercy grant, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. Amen.

FINIS.